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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3798th meeting of the Security Council, held on 11 July 1997 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Sierra Leone", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 27 May 1997 (S/PRST/1997/29) following the military coup d'état in Sierra Leone on 25 May 1997. It remains deeply concerned about the continuing crisis in Sierra Leone and its negative humanitarian consequences on the civilian population including refugees and internally displaced persons and in particular, the atrocities committed against Sierra Leone's citizens, foreign nationals and personnel of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) monitoring group. It reiterates its view that the attempt to overthrow the democratically elected Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah is unacceptable and calls again for the immediate and unconditional restoration of constitutional order in the country.

The Security Council is concerned about the grave crisis in Sierra Leone which endangers the peace, security and stability of the whole region and, in particular, about its possible negative impact on the ongoing peace process in neighbouring Liberia.

The Security Council strongly supports the decision of the Thirty-third Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 2 to 4 June 1997 which appealed to the ECOWAS leaders and the international community to help the people of Sierra Leone to restore the constitutional order in that country and which underlined the imperative need to implement the Abidjan Agreement which continues to serve as a viable framework for peace, stability and reconciliation in Sierra Leone.

The Security Council welcomes the participation of the Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS members of the Committee of Four in its 3797th meeting of 11 July 1997.

The Security Council welcomes the mediation efforts initiated by ECOWAS and expresses its full support for the objectives of these efforts as set out in the final communiqué (S/1997/499), issued at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS, held in Conakry, Guinea, on 26 June 1997.

The Security Council calls upon those who have seized power to cooperate fully with these efforts so that the constitutional order in Sierra Leone will be restored immediately.

The Security Council will continue to follow closely the progress of efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of the crisis and stands ready to consider appropriate measures if constitutional order in Sierra Leone is not restored without delay.

The Security Council will remain actively seized of this matter.